

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

February 2005

Cambridge Community,

It is my pleasure to present the Cambridge Police Department's *Annual Crime Report 2004*, the ninth Annual Report produced during my tenure as Commissioner. The objective of this report is to give Cambridge residents a realistic view of their risk of victimization and to provide detailed information on criminal activity in our City.

Despite the fact that the 4,319 index crimes reported in Cambridge in 2004 represents the second lowest total recorded in the City in the past 40 years; serious crime increased 9% when compared with the 2003 numbers. The increase of 350 index crimes this year should be tempered with the knowledge that the 2003 Uniform Crime Number was the lowest reported to the FBI since the 1950's. The 9% increase in serious crime in Cambridge was driven by an upswing in burglary and a surge in larcenies. Reducing the totals for both of these crimes will be one of the major goals of our Department in 2005. Proactive techniques such as crime pattern analysis, targeted patrolling, distribution of prevention advice, and encouragement and support to Neighborhood Watch programs, will be utilized to attack these problems.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reflect upon the City and Police Department's accomplishments during 2004. It is of great significance to me that over the past two calendar years there has not been a citizen complaint against any officer for excessive force. To my knowledge, this is unprecedented in Cambridge, or any other jurisdiction in this region. This feat speaks to the outstanding training, restraint, and general abilities of the Department. Of further note, while this was accomplished, there has not been a decrease in the effectiveness of enforcement in the City.

Over the past two years, there have been a number of excellent arrests and outstanding prosecutions while the overall number of complaints to Internal Affairs continued to fall. Again, this is an indication that members of the Department are working skillfully with the public.

It is also quite notable that for the first time in 20 years, and for only the second time in 45 years, no murders were recorded in the City of Cambridge. This fact is a tribute to all the people, departments and community organizations that contributed to violence prevention and reduction efforts in our City. The medical community in Cambridge and Boston also assisted in this accomplishment by providing life saving care to those seriously injured by violence.

The *2004 Annual Crime Report* is one of the many resources the Cambridge Police Department provides to the citizens of Cambridge. We believe that we are in the top percentile of police departments in the nation in the quantity and quality of information that we provide to the public on a regular basis, and our Crime Reports have consistently won awards and accolades from international organizations. The Department will remain committed to providing timely and relevant information to the community. I urge you to visit our website at <http://www.cambridgepolice.org> for current information on crime and for important community alerts. Armed with this knowledge, the community and the Police Department can work together to develop effective strategies to ensure a high quality of life and to reduce crime and fear in the City of Cambridge.

Sincerely,



Ronnie Watson
Police Commissioner